

Message Text

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45

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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R 021400Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8397

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRETORIA 2695

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, WA, SF

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: ELECTIONS FOR OWAMBO LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL A FARCE

REF: A) PRETORIA 2568 (NOTAL); B) PRETORIA 2613 (NOTAL);
C) USUN 2758 (NOTAL)

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1. IN CLEAR DEMONSTRATION OF SOLIDARITY AGAINST SAG-

APPOINTED OWAMBO GOVERNMENT AND POLICY OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, OWAMBO VOTERS IN SOUTH WEST AFRICA (NAMIBIA) ARE BOYCOTTING AUGUST 1-2 ELECTIONS FOR OWAMBO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. AS OF MID-MORNING AUGUST 2 ABOUT 500 OF 42,000 REGISTERED VOTERS HAVE CAST VOTES AT POLLING BOOTHS IN OWAMBO AND IN WHITE AREAS WHERE OVAMBO MIGRANT WORKERS RESIDE.

2. WELL-INFORMED SOURCE IN WINDHOEK TOLD US THIS MORNING THAT OF 3,000 REGISTERED VOTERS IN KATATURA, WINDHOEK'S AFRICAN TOWNSHIP, ONLY THREE HAVE VOTED. ALL THREE, HE SAID, WERE AFRICAN MEMBERS OF SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE. IN WALVIS BAY NINE VOTES HAVE BEEN CAST. IN OTJIWARANGO NOT ONE VOTER HAS SHOWN UP AT POLLS.

3. IN ARTICLE TODAY, RAND DAILY MAIL COMMENTS THAT SUCCESS OF BOYCOTT BY OPPONENTS OF PRO-SAG OWAMBO GOVERNMENT IS "AN OBVIOUS SLAP IN THE FACE FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES, WHO ARE HOPEFUL THE ELECTION WILL SHOW THE WORLD THAT THE OVAMBOS -- SWA'S LARGEST POPULATION GROUP -- ARE PREPARED TO EMBRACE THE POLICY OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT." PAUCITY OF VOTER TURNOUT "ALSO REPRESENTED AN OVERWHELMING VICTORY FOR OPPOSITION LEADERS IN OWAMBO, WHO HAVE BEEN URGING THEIR SUPPORTERS TO SHUN THE ELECTIONS SINCE THE START OF THE CAMPAIGN A FEW WEEKS AGO."

4. AS NOTED IN OUR A-120 OF JULY 13, OUTCOME OF ELECTION WAS AND REMAINS FOREGONE CONCLUSION. ONLY ONE PARTY, THE PRO-SAG OWAMBO INDEPENDENCE PARTY OF OWAMBO'S CHIEF MINISTER FILEMON ELIFAS, FIELDDED CANDIDATES FOR THE 21 ELECTED SEATS. SWAPO AND ANOTHER OPPOSITION PARTY, JOHANNES NANGUTUUALS'S DEMOCRATIC COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PARTY, REFUSED TO REGISTER WHEN OWAMBO GOVERNMENT PROHIBITED POLITICAL MEETINGS AND MADE IT CLEAR NO OPPOSITION PARTY WOULD BE ALLOWED TO CAMPAIGN. THUS, WITH ONLY FOUR INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES RUNNING, 17 OF ELECTED MEMBERS AND ALL OF 35 APPOINTED MEMBERS WERE SURE TO FAVOR SAG POLICIES AND SAG COULD COUNT ON A COMPLIANT HOMELAND GOVERNMENT IN OWAMBO. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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5. SAG OFFICIALS WERE COUNTING ON REASONABLE TURNOUT AT POLLS TO GIVE ELECTION AND SAG POLICIES AT LEAST A MODICUM OF LEGITIMACY. OBVIOUSLY SOMEBODY GOOFED. ONCE AGAIN SAG HAS SHOWN THAT IT IS FAR OUT OF TOUCH WITH SENTIMENTS OF MAJORITY OF OVAMBOS.

6. WINDHOEK SOURCE SUMMED UP OWAMBO ELECTION BY REFERRING

TO IT AS "BIGGEST ABORTION OF HISTORY." THIS MAY BE
OVERSTATING IT A BIT, BUT CERTAINLY SUCCESSFUL BOYCOTT
REPRESENTS SERIOUS SET-BACK FOR SAG'S INTENTION TO
ESTABLISH INDEPENDENT HOMELAND IN OWAMBO AND TO PORTRAY
DECISION TO DO SO AS ONE THAT HAD RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL
BACKING OF THE PEOPLE CONCERNED.
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